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WASHINGTON STATE QUALITY RATING AND IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM—ELEMENTS JUNE 2006

Washington State's Quality Rating and Improvement System is built on lessons learned through research and best practices experience. The QRIS model defines a progression of quality from basic state licensing standards (including recognized certification or program standards)¹ towards accreditation (using recognized national accrediting organizations). The QRIS is organized around 5 broad categories of quality, with cultural relevancy, inclusion of all children including those with special needs, and parent/family involvement are principles woven throughout each category.

Categories/Indicators of Quality

Professional Development

- Education level of Director (For family providers: Education level of provider)
 - Education level of Lead and Assistant Teachers (for centers)
 - Participation in professional development and continuing education
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Curriculum and Learning Environment

- Environment promotes learning for all children (age-appropriate setup, equipment/toys, etc.)
 - Teaching staff fosters warm, nurturing, and balanced relationships (teacher: child and child: child)
 - Daily activities and curriculum promote whole-child development (cognitive, emotional, social, physical, etc.) for all children in care; activities are adapted to all children's cultures, special needs, strengths, interests, and developmental goals.
 - Documentation of child progress and achievements; integration of assessment into activities and curriculum
 - Behavior guidance
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Family and Community Partnerships

- Knowing and communicating with families
 - Engaging families in program and parenting support
 - Connection to local schools and services
 - Relationship with the local community
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Management Practices

- Program philosophy and leadership (includes allocation of staff time to priority activities)
 - Business practices (includes finance, liability, fees, etc.)
 - Wages and personnel practices (for centers)
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Program Assessment & Quality Improvement

- Increasing sophistication with assessment quality improvement planning
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¹ Recognized certificates include those from tribes, school districts, ECEAP, and Head Start.

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Each level of quality is met through achievement of core standards and earning elective points across each category. Standards are cumulative (e.g. to achieve a level 3, a provider must meet core standards for levels 1, 2, and 3 and earn a specified number of elective points (point totals have yet to be determined). Points have yet to be determined.

Level 5			
Level 4		Level 3	
Level 2		Level 1	
Core elements of Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4		Core elements of Levels 1, 2, and 3	
+		+	
xx points/category		xx points/category	
Accreditation by appropriate and recognized national organization		Has license and/or meets approved certification/program standards	